



Drug and Substance Misuse Policy

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Approved by

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Purpose

This policy has been developed with reference to *DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies September 2012. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2025, Searching, Screening and Confiscation (DfE 2022)*, and *Behaviour in Schools (DfE 2022)*. It reflects Upwell Academy's safeguarding-first approach, the needs of a primary school community, and current legal duties.

It is designed to:

- Promote the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff and the wider school community.
- Prevent and reduce harm associated with drugs and substances.
- Set clear expectations, roles and procedures regarding drugs on site and during school activities.
- Ensure consistent, proportionate and safeguarding-led responses to incidents.
- Provide age-appropriate education for pupils within the curriculum.
- Support early identification and intervention in partnership with families and agencies.

Illegal and other unauthorised drugs are not acceptable. Authorised drugs (medicines) are managed only under the school Medicines Policy. Pupils must not carry medication unless this is agreed via an individual healthcare plan (IHCP). Vaping products and tobacco are prohibited.

Health and safety first: In any incident, the immediate health, welfare and safeguarding of pupils and others take priority.

Pastoral approach: Responses will be proportionate, supportive and consider age, needs and context.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents and carers, academy committee members, contractors, volunteers, visitors and partner agencies while on school premises or engaged in any school activity.

This policy applies to school buildings, grounds, school transport, online platforms used for school purposes, off-site visits and residentials, and any event under school supervision.

This policy also applies to pupils representing the academy off site and applies to conduct outside of school that impacts the safety or the reputation of the academy.

For pupils educated off-site or with dual placements, this policy applies in coordination with the host provider. Roles and responsibilities will be confirmed in writing with any alternative provision provider or other school.

Definitions and Terminology

Drugs: Any substance which, when taken, changes the way the body works or the way a person feels, thinks or behaves.

This includes:

- Prescription and over-the-counter medicines
- Volatile substances, including aerosols and solvents
- Alcohol
- Tobacco and vaping products, e-cigarettes and related paraphernalia
- Illegal drugs and controlled substances
- New psychoactive substances
- Any unauthorised substances on school premises

Other terms used:

Possession: having a substance on a person or in their property or space under their control.

Supply: giving, sharing or selling a substance.

Paraphernalia: items used to take, store or prepare substances.

Misuse: use in a way that causes harm or is against law or school rules.

Incident: any situation involving substances that may require action under this policy.

Staff with Key Responsibilities

We designate specific roles to ensure effective oversight and management of drug-related education, prevention and incident response:

Principal - holds strategic responsibility for this area, including liaison with academy committee members and the police where appropriate.

Designated Safeguarding Lead has oversight of all safeguarding matters related to substance concerns, including referrals, record-keeping and multi-agency coordination.

PSHE Lead is responsible for the planning and delivery of the drug education curriculum and for providing guidance and resources to staff.

SENDCo ensures that inclusion needs and reasonable adjustments are fully considered when supporting pupils affected by substance-related issues.

Educational Visits Coordinator oversees risk assessments and procedures for all off-site activity to ensure pupils remain safe.

Operations Manager manages the secure storage and disposal of any substances or paraphernalia found on site, in line with statutory requirements.

First Aid Lead provides immediate care and support during any incident involving suspected substance misuse.

Together, these roles ensure a coordinated, safeguarding-led approach across the academy.

Staff Support and Training

Upwell Academy ensures that all staff receive appropriate training in relation to drug awareness and safeguarding. Drug-related information and expectations are introduced as part of staff induction and revisited during annual safeguarding refresher training to maintain confidence and consistency

of practice. Targeted continuing professional development is provided for colleagues with specific responsibilities, including the DSL team, pastoral staff, first aiders and PSHE teachers, ensuring they are equipped to respond effectively to incidents and deliver high-quality education. Training is further reinforced through a cascade model, with key messages shared via staff briefings, coaching and ongoing professional dialogue. Attendance at all relevant CPD, along with associated certificates, is recorded and monitored through SmartLog.

Management of Drugs at the academy

Dealing with Paraphernalia and Suspected Substances

When staff encounter suspected drug paraphernalia or substances on school premises, they must not attempt to identify items by smelling, tasting or handling them unnecessarily. If it is safe to do so, the item should be placed immediately into a sealed and clearly labelled container and secured in a locked location. Staff must record the incident without delay and inform the designated lead for follow-up. Arrangements for disposal will then be made through the police or an approved pharmacy service, in line with legal and safeguarding requirements.

Storage, Disposal and Safety

All medicines held on site are stored and administered strictly in accordance with the school's Medicines Policy. Access to medication or controlled areas is restricted to authorised staff only, and the school maintains clear audit trails for the administration, storage and disposal of the medicines it manages. These processes ensure compliance with safeguarding and health and safety expectations.

Searches

Searches are carried out in line with DfE statutory powers and the Behaviour Policy. The grounds for conducting a search, whether consent was required and obtained, the presence of a witness, and the scope of the search must all be documented clearly. Personal searches of pupils are not permitted under any circumstances. However, searches of outer clothing and bags may be undertaken when lawful and appropriate. School property, including lockers and desks, may be searched where this is reasonable and consistent with school policy. All searches are recorded, and parents or carers are informed unless doing so would place the child at risk of harm.

Investigation Strategies

Investigations into drug-related incidents will include careful and factual recording of events, pupil voice, chronology and contextual factors. Outcomes of an investigation may lead to a range of responses, which could include educational measures, pastoral or wellbeing support, behaviour-related consequences, safeguarding referrals, external agency support or, in more serious cases, police involvement. Responses will always be proportionate, child-centred and aligned with the academy's safeguarding responsibilities. The academy recognises that primary-aged children may exhibit curiosity or naivety rather than intent. Responses will prioritise safeguarding, support and education.

Parents/carers under the influence on school premises

When dealing with parents or carers who appear to be under the influence while on school premises, the academy's first priority is the safety and wellbeing of the child. Staff will adopt a calm, non-confrontational approach and may offer alternative collection arrangements where appropriate.

If there is any indication that the child's safety is at risk, the academy may involve the police and will consider an immediate safeguarding referral. All actions, decisions and concerns arising from such incidents are recorded promptly and followed up on CPOMS in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Police Involvement

Upon discovery or strong suspicion of illegal substances or supply, significant risk to safety, or where police are needed for disposal, the Principal will contact the police.

Liaison arrangements - School's named police liaison officer:

PC Maddi Cage

Police Constable 181

West Norfolk Neighbourhood Policing Team – A33 Downham Market Beat Manager

101 Ext 5381

Evidence relating to drug incidents is handled with the highest level of care to maintain integrity and safety. All items are secured immediately in an appropriate, locked storage location, with staff ensuring minimal handling to prevent contamination or interference. A clear and accurate chain of custody is recorded for every item, detailing who found it, who handled it, how it was stored, and when it was transferred or disposed of, in line with legal and safeguarding requirements.

Information Sharing

Upwell Academy shares information strictly on a need-to-know basis, ensuring that any disclosure is proportionate, lawful and aligned with statutory safeguarding duties. All sensitive records are stored securely with restricted access. Wherever appropriate, the school seeks the agreement of pupils and parents or carers before sharing information and clearly explains any safeguarding exceptions to confidentiality. If at any point a pupil's safety is considered to be at risk, including concerns related to parental drug or alcohol misuse, staff follow the procedures set out by the local safeguarding partnership. This approach is fully consistent with, and should be read alongside, the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Involvement of Parents/Carers

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers when substance-related concerns arise. The academy will communicate with families in a timely, sensitive and proportionate manner, unless doing so would place the child at risk, in which case safeguarding procedures take precedence. The academy also encourages ongoing parental engagement by providing guidance to help them support drug education and safety messages at home. This collaborative approach strengthens consistency between school and home and promotes the wellbeing of all pupils.

The Role of Governors – Academy Committee

The academy committee plays an active role in ensuring effective governance of drug education, prevention and incident management. They contribute to the development, approval and periodic review of this policy and maintain oversight of the drug education curriculum as part of their wider monitoring duties. Where appropriate, governors may also be involved in relevant panels or appeals, ensuring decisions are fair, transparent and consistent with statutory guidance and academy procedures.

Staff Conduct and Drugs

All staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the safety and wellbeing of pupils at all times. Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at work or when supervising pupils, including during educational visits, off-site activities and residential. Where a member of staff is prescribed medication that may impair their ability to carry out their duties safely, this must be disclosed through the appropriate HR procedures so that reasonable adjustments and risk assessments can be considered. Any breach of these expectations will be managed under the academy's disciplinary and safeguarding procedures, with access to occupational health and appropriate support services where required.

Curriculum: Drug Education

We deliver drug education through a carefully planned and age-appropriate curriculum embedded within PSHE and science. Teaching focuses on helping pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including simple rules about medicines, making healthy choices, recognising and resisting pressure, identifying trusted adults and knowing how to seek emergency help. Lessons are inclusive, evidence-informed and sensitive to the developmental needs of all pupils. The academy uses approved resources and teacher guidance, including the **Pol-Ed scheme of work**, which is endorsed by **Norfolk Constabulary** and provides high-quality, locally relevant materials that promote children's safety and awareness. Learning is regularly reviewed through assessment and pupil voice to ensure it is meaningful, understood and adapted to meet the needs of the cohort.

Upwell Academy provides a progressive, developmentally appropriate drug education curriculum from Reception to Year 6.

In Reception through Year 2, teaching focuses on the foundations of personal safety, introducing simple rules about medicines, identifying trusted adults, making healthy choices, learning to say no, and understanding how to seek emergency help, including when and how to dial 999.

In Years 3 and 4, pupils build on this learning by exploring rules around medicines in greater depth, understanding the effects of everyday substances such as caffeine and household products, practising strategies for resisting pressure, and strengthening their knowledge of how to stay safe both on- and offline. They also further develop confidence in asking for help from safe adults.

By Years 5 and 6, pupils learn about the risks associated with tobacco, vaping and alcohol, the effects these substances can have on the body, and how peer influence and media messaging can shape decision-making. Teaching at this stage also includes media literacy, seeking help when worried, and responding to emergencies. Learning is explicitly linked to relevant areas of the science curriculum, such as the body, health and human development.

Monitoring

Drug-related incidents, curriculum delivery and staff training logs will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Trends or concerns will be reviewed termly.

Review

The Senior Leadership Team will review this policy every two years or sooner if necessary.

Links to Other Policies

This policy aligns with or references:

- Mission and ethos statement
 - Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Medicines and Administration of Medicines Policy
 - Confidentiality and Information Sharing Protocol
 - Attendance Policy
 - Educational Visits Policy and risk assessment procedures
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including safer working practice
 - Online Safety Policy
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